


LONGMAN



DICTIONARY OF LANGUAGE TEACHING & APPLIED LINGUISTICS



Jack C. Richards
Richard Schmidt

**FOURTH
EDITION**



MOST COMPREHENSIVE EDITION EVER - 350 NEW ENTRIES

**Longman Dictionary of
Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics**

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LANGUAGE TEACHING AND APPLIED LINGUISTICS

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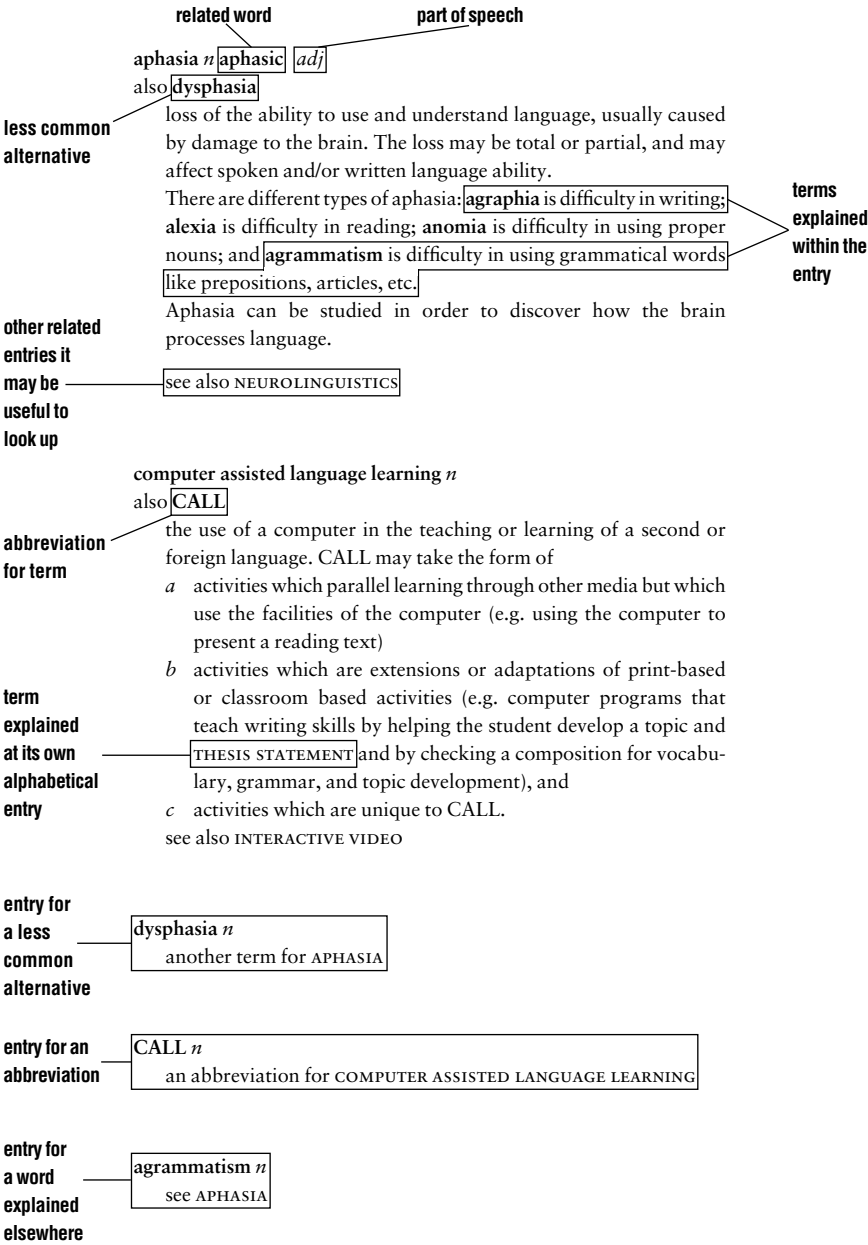
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GUIDE TO THE DICTIONARY



INTRODUCTION

Who is this dictionary for?

This dictionary is intended for:

- students taking undergraduate or graduate courses in language teaching or applied linguistics, particularly those planning to take up a career in the teaching of English as a Second or Foreign Language or in foreign language teaching
- language teachers doing in-service or pre-service courses, such as the UCLES Diploma in Teaching English to Adults
- students doing introductory courses in linguistics and related areas
- teachers and others interested in the practical applications of language study

Why this dictionary?

Language teaching and applied linguistics are fields which have their own core subject matter and which also draw on a number of complementary fields of study. Among the core subject matter disciplines are second language acquisition, methodology, testing, and syllabus design. The complementary fields of study include both the language based disciplines such as linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics, as well as the education based disciplines such as curriculum development, teacher education, and evaluation. The result is that students taking courses in language teaching and applied linguistics encounter a large number of specialized terms which frequently occur in articles, books and lectures. This dictionary attempts to clarify the meanings and uses of these terms.

The scope of the dictionary

The dictionary was written for those with little or no background in language teaching or applied linguistics.

We have given special attention to English, and the majority of the examples in the dictionary are from English, but the dictionary will also be helpful to those interested in other languages. Although the dictionary is not intended primarily for those who already have a specialized training in language teaching or applied linguistics, it will serve as a reference book in areas with which they are less familiar. It should also be useful to general readers who need further information about the terms which occur in the fields of language teaching and applied linguistics.

Language teaching and applied linguistics

This dictionary includes the core vocabulary of both language teaching and applied linguistics. The field of language teaching is concerned with the development of language programmes and courses, teaching methodology, materials development, second language acquisition theory, testing, teacher training and related areas. The dictionary includes terms from the following areas of study in the field of language teaching:

- teaching methods and approaches in language teaching
- curriculum development and syllabus design
- second language acquisition
- the teaching of listening, speaking, reading and writing
- computer assisted language learning
- teacher education in language teaching
- English grammar and pronunciation
- language testing, research methods, and basic statistics

The dictionary also includes terms from the field of applied linguistics. For the purposes of this book, “applied linguistics” refers to the practical applications of linguistics and language theory and includes terms from the following areas of study:

- introductory linguistics, including phonology, phonetics, syntax, semantics and morphology
- discourse analysis
- sociolinguistics, including the sociology of language and communicative competence
- psycholinguistics, including learning theories

What the dictionary contains

This dictionary contains some 3500 entries, which define in as simple and precise a way as possible, the most frequently occurring terms found in the areas listed above. Each term has been selected on the basis of its importance within an area and reflects the fact that the term has a particular meaning when used within that area, a meaning unlikely to be listed in other dictionaries. Many of these terms were included in the third edition of this dictionary, but in preparing the fourth edition, a number of items no longer in common use were deleted, revisions were made to a number of entries, and some 360 new entries have been added to reflect current usage in language teaching and applied linguistics.

Our aim has been to produce clear and simple definitions which communicate the basic and essential meanings of a term in non-technical language.

Introduction

Definitions are self-contained as far as possible, but cross references show links to other terms and concepts.

Acknowledgements

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A

AAAL *n*

an abbreviation for **American Association for Applied Linguistics**

AAE *n*

an abbreviation for **AFRICAN AMERICAN ENGLISH**

AAVE *n*

an abbreviation for **AFRICAN AMERICAN VERNACULAR ENGLISH**
see **AFRICAN AMERICAN ENGLISH**

ability grouping *n*

in teaching, the placement of students in groups or classes according to their ability in a skill or subject, e.g. based on their language proficiency. Groups containing students of different ability levels are known as *mixed ability groups* or *heterogeneous groups*, while groups composed of students with similar abilities, achievement, etc., are known as *homogeneous groups*.
see **GROUPING**

ablaut *n*

a process by which an inflected form of a word is formed by changes in the vowel of the stem. For example, the past tense of *sing* is *sang* and the plural of *goose* is *geese*.

aboriginal language *n*

see **INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE**

absolute *n*

an adjective or adverb that cannot have a comparative or superlative form. For example *perfectly* and *unique* already express the idea of “to a maximum degree” and cannot therefore be used with comparative forms as in *most *perfectly*, or *more *unique*.

absolute clause (phrase, construction) *n*

a non-finite adverbial clause or other adverbial construction that is not linked syntactically to the main clause, e.g.
As far as I can tell, she is not having any problems with the course.

abstract noun *n*

see **CONCRETE NOUN**

ABX discrimination

ABX discrimination *n*

in PSYCHOLINGUISTICS, a task in which three stimuli are presented in a trial. A and B are different (for example, the words *ramp* and *lamp*) and the subject's task is to choose which of them is matched by the final stimulus.

academic discourse *n*

the language and discourse of academic genres. The study of academic discourse focuses on the nature, contexts, production and interpretation of discourse and texts that occur in academic settings.

see also ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES, GENRE, REGISTER

academic language *n*

the special registers and genres of language used in the learning of academic subject matter in formal schooling contexts. Learning academic language is essential for MAINSTREAMING second language learners and for students studying ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES.

academic literacy *n*

the ability to understand and participate in the academic discourse of academic genres, e.g. in fields such as science, law and literature, including the ability to produce and understand written and spoken texts as well as recognizing the social norms and discursive practices of academic communities. The field of ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES seeks to develop the skills of academic literacy.

academic vocabulary *n*

the most frequently occurring vocabulary in academic texts. In English a core academic vocabulary of some 600 words (e.g. words such as *evidence*, *estimate*, *feature*, *impact*, *method*, *release*) is common to a wide range of academic fields and accounts for around 10% of the words in any academic text. Students need to be familiar with this vocabulary if they are to complete academic courses successfully. The teaching of academic vocabulary is an aspect of ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES. Academic vocabulary is determined from analysis of a corpus of academic English. Academic Vocabulary may be compared with Technical Vocabulary, which refers to words specific to a particular topic, field or discipline.

Academic Word List *n*

a list of 570 word families which is said to make up the core vocabulary of much academic writing, based on an analysis of a large corpus of academic

texts but excluding the 2000 most frequent word in English. The list has been widely used in the teaching of ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES.
see ENGLISH FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES

accent¹ *n*

greater emphasis on a syllable so that it stands out from the other syllables in a word. For example, in English the noun 'import has the accent on the first syllable *im-* while the verb *im'port* has the accent on the second syllable *-port*:

This car is a foreign import.

We import all our coffee.

see also PROMINENCE, STRESS

accent² *n*

in the written form of some languages, particularly in French, a mark which is placed over a vowel. An accent may show:

a a difference in pronunciation (see DIACRITIC)

For example, in the French word *prés* “meadows”, the **acute accent** on the *e* indicates a different vowel sound from that in *près* “near” with a **grave accent**.

b a difference in meaning without any change in pronunciation, e.g.
French *ou* “or” and *où* “where”.

accent³ *n*

a particular way of speaking which tells the listener something about the speaker’s background.

A person’s pronunciation may show:

a the region or country they come from, e.g.

a northern accent

an American accent

b what social class they belong to, e.g.

a lower middle class accent

c whether or not the speaker is a native speaker of the language, e.g.

She speaks English with an accent/with a German accent.

see also DIALECT, SOCIOLECT

accent⁴ *n*

another term for STRESS

accent discrimination *n*

discrimination or bias against speakers with foreign, regional, or social class ACCENTS³, for example in employment or in legal proceedings.

see also FORENSIC LINGUISTICS

accent reduction

accent reduction *n*

programmes designed to help second language speakers speak a second or foreign language without showing evidence of a foreign accent. Such programmes reflect the fact that many second language speakers experience discrimination based on their accent. There is no evidence however that reduction in a foreign accent necessarily entails an increase in intelligibility. Hence many educators argue for a greater tolerance of foreign accents.

see also ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

acceptability judgement task *n*

one of several types of tasks (or tests) that require subjects to judge whether particular sentences are possible or not in either their native language or a language they are learning. If the task instructions specify that subjects are to judge whether or not a sentence is acceptable, the task is called an **acceptability judgement task**; if they are asked to judge whether a particular sentence is grammatical, the task is usually called a **grammaticality judgement task** (or test).

acceptable *adj*, **acceptability** *n*

a term referring to a linguistic utterance (for example, a word, a particular pronunciation, a phrase or a sentence) that is judged by NATIVE SPEAKERS to be grammatical, correct, or socially appropriate, either in general or in a particular community or context.

acceptable alternative method *n*

see CLOZE TEST

acceptable word method *n*

see CLOZE TEST

access *n, v*

in COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING, locating or obtaining information or data. **Sequential access** means locating information in sequence, for example by fast forwarding an audio cassette. **Direct access** or **random access** means locating information directly, in such a way that access time is not dependent on its location.

accidental gap *n*

in WORD FORMATION, a non-occurring but possible form, for example *unsad* as an ANTONYM of *sad*. When learners produce such forms, these are considered to be examples of OVER-GENERALIZATION.

accommodation¹ *n*

shifts in the style of speaking people make such as when a person changes their way of speaking to make it sound more like or less like the speech of the person they are talking to. For example, a teacher may use simpler words and sentence structures when he/she is talking to a class of young children. This is called **convergence**. Alternatively a person may exaggerate their rural accent because they are annoyed by the attitude of someone from the city. This is called **divergence**. Convergence is a strategy in which people adapt to each other's speech by adjusting such things as speech rate, pauses, length of utterance, and pronunciation.

see also ACCENT³

accommodation² *n*

see ADAPTATION²

accomplishments *n*

see ASPECT

accountability *n*

the answerability of all those involved in applied linguistics for the quality of their work. For example, test developers need to be able to explain the rationale behind the assessment techniques they use and their results to test takers and test users; language programme administrators are accountable to clients who pay for special courses, as well as to students for the quality of instruction; and public school programme administrators are accountable to parents and other members of the public. Accountability includes the documentation and reporting of procedures used to develop curriculum and courses and of practices used in the hiring of teachers, selection of materials, evaluation of teachers and courses and the assessment of learners and learning outcomes.

accredited interpreter *n*

see INTERPRETATION

accredited translator *n*

see TRANSLATION

acculturation *n*

a process in which changes in the language, culture, and system of values of a group happen through interaction with another group with a different language, culture, and system of values. For example, in second language learning, acculturation may affect how well one group (e.g. a group of

acculturation model

immigrants in a country) learn the language of another (e.g. the dominant group).

see also ACCULTURATION MODEL, ASSIMILATION², SOCIAL DISTANCE

acculturation model *n*

in second language acquisition, the theory that the rate and level of ultimate success of second language acquisition in naturalistic settings (without instruction) is a function of the degree to which learners acculturate to the target language community. Acculturation may involve a large number of social and psychological variables, but is generally considered to be the process through which an individual takes on the beliefs, values and culture of a new group.

accuracy *n*

see FLUENCY

accuracy order *n*

also **difficulty order**

some linguistic items, forms, and rules seem to be consistently produced with higher accuracy than others by language learners, permitting such items to be ordered with respect to their relative difficulty. Accuracy orders based on CROSS-SECTIONAL RESEARCH are sometimes taken as evidence for an order of acquisition, although such claims need to be reinforced through LONGITUDINAL METHOD.

accusative case *n*

the form of a noun or noun phrase which shows that it functions as the direct object of the verb in a sentence. For example, in the German sentence:

Ursula kaufte einen neuen Tisch.

Ursula bought a new table.

in the noun phrase *einen neuen Tisch*, the article *ein* and the adjective *neu* have the inflectional ending *-en* to show that the noun phrase is in the accusative case because it is the direct object of the verb.

see also CASE¹

achievements *n*

see ASPECT

achievement test *n*

a test designed to measure how much of a language learners have successfully learned with specific reference to a particular course, textbook, or programme of instruction, thus a type of CRITERION-REFERENCED TEST. An

achievement test is typically given at the end of a course, whereas when administered periodically throughout a course of instruction to measure language learning up to that point, it is alternatively called a **PROGRESS TEST**. Its results are often used to make advancement or graduation decisions regarding learners or judge the effectiveness of a programme, which may lead to curricular changes.

The difference between this and a more general type of test called a **PROFICIENCY TEST** is that the latter is not linked to any particular course of instruction and is thus a type of **NORM-REFERENCED TEST**. For example, an achievement test might be a listening comprehension test if all of its items are based on a particular set of dialogues in a textbook. In contrast, a proficiency test might use similar test items but would not be linked to any particular textbook or language **SYLLABUS**.

acoustic cue *n*

an aspect of the acoustic signal in speech which is used to distinguish between phonetic features. For example **VOICE ONSET TIME** is an acoustic cue which is used to distinguish between the sounds /t/ and /d/

acoustic filtering *n*

(in listening comprehension) the ability to hear and identify only some of the sounds that are being spoken. For example, when someone is learning a foreign language, the speech sounds of their native language may act as a filter, making it difficult for them to hear and identify new or unfamiliar sounds in the foreign language.

acoustic phonetics *n*

see **PHONETICS**

acquisition *n*

see **FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**, **LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**, **SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

acquisition order *n*

another term for **ORDER OF ACQUISITION**

acrolect *n*

see **POST-CREOLE CONTINUUM**, **SPEECH CONTINUUM**

acronym *n*

a word made from the initials of the phrase it stands for, for example “**IPA**” for **International Phonetics Association** or **International Phonetics Alphabet**.

ACT

ACT (pronounced “act-star”) *n*

see ADAPTIVE CONTROL OF THOUGHT

ACTFL *n*

an abbreviation for **American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**

ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview *n*

also OPI

a structured interview carried out to assess a learner’s ability to use the target language in terms of the levels described by the ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES, used as an assessment of speaking proficiency.

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines *n*

proficiency descriptions developed under the auspices of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Since their latest revision in 1996, the guidelines consist of descriptions of ten proficiency levels: Novice Low, Novice Mid, Novice High, Intermediate Low, Intermediate Mid, Intermediate High, Advanced Low, Advanced Mid, Advanced High, and Superior.

action research *n*

- 1 research that has the primary goal of finding ways of solving problems, bringing about social change or practical action, in comparison with research that seeks to discover scientific principles or develop general laws and theories.
- 2 (in teacher education) teacher-initiated classroom research that seeks to increase the teacher’s understanding of classroom teaching and learning and to bring about improvements in classroom practices. Action research typically involves small-scale investigative projects in the teacher’s own classroom, and consists of the following cycle of activities. The teacher (or a group of teachers)
 - a* selects an aspect of classroom behaviour to examine in more detail (e.g. the teacher’s use of questions)
 - b* selects a suitable research technique (e.g. recording classroom lessons)
 - c* collects data and analyzes them
 - d* develops an action plan to help bring about a change in classroom behaviour (e.g. to reduce the frequency of questions that the teacher answers himself or herself)
 - e* acts to implement the plan
 - f* observes the effects of the action plan on behaviour.

action zone *n*

in teaching, the pattern of teacher-student interaction in a class as reflected by the students with whom the teacher regularly enters into eye contact, those students to whom the teacher addresses questions, and those students who are nominated to take an active part in the lesson.

active listening *n*

in language teaching, a procedure for teaching listening in which students show their understanding of what a speaker says by repeating (often in other words) what the speaker has said or by responding in other ways to show comprehension.

active/passive language knowledge *n*

see PRODUCTIVE/RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE

active teaching *n*

another term for DIRECT TEACHING

active vocabulary *n*

see PRODUCTIVE/RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE

active voice *n*

see VOICE¹

activities *n*

see ASPECT

activity *n*

in language teaching, a general term for any classroom procedure that requires students to use and practise their available language resources.
see also DRILL, TASK, TECHNIQUE

activity theory *n*

a learning framework associated with SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY in which individuals are said to act on objects (employing social and cultural resources including language and patterns of behaviour) in order to achieve specific learning outcomes.

acute accent *n*

the accent¹, e.g. on French *prés* “meadows”.
see also ACCENT²

adaptation

adaptation¹ *n*

changes made in the use of published teaching materials in order to make them more suitable for particular groups of learners, e.g. by supplementing, modifying or deleting parts of a textbook.

adaptation² *n*

also **equilibration**

in Piagetian theory, a cover term for two ways in which a child adapts to his or her environment: **assimilation**³, interpreting new information in terms of the child's current knowledge, and **accommodation**², changing the child's cognitive structure to understand new information.

adaptive control of thought *n*

also **ACT***

a model of skill learning, involving a progression from a controlled stage based on DECLARATIVE KNOWLEDGE to an autonomous stage based on PROCEDURAL KNOWLEDGE. Processes involved in this development include **proceduralization** (the translation of propositional knowledge into behavioural sequences, **chunking** (the binding together of commonly occurring units, which allows more information to be maintained in WORKING MEMORY), GENERALIZATION, **rule narrowing**, and **rule strengthening**. Language acquisition is seen in this model as a type of skill learning.

adaptive testing *n*

a form of individually tailored testing in which test items are selected from an ITEM BANK where test items are stored in rank order with respect to their ITEM DIFFICULTY and presented to test takers during the test on the basis of their responses to previous test items, until it is determined that sufficient information regarding test takers' abilities has been collected. For example, when a multiple-choice adaptive vocabulary test is administered, a test taker is initially presented with an item of medium difficulty. If he or she answers it correctly, then a slightly more difficult item is presented, whereas if the item is answered incorrectly, then a slightly easier item is presented. An ORAL PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW can be viewed as a type of adaptive testing in the sense that an interviewer (i.e. tester) adjusts the difficulty level of language on the basis of an evolving assessment of the interviewee's (i.e. test taker's) language ability. Adaptive testing finds its most promising application in COMPUTER ADAPTIVE TESTING.

additive bilingual education *n*

also **additive bilingualism**

a form of BILINGUAL EDUCATION in which the language of instruction is not the mother tongue or home language of the children, and is not intended to

replace it. In an additive bilingual education programme the first language is maintained and supported.

For example, the bilingual programmes in French for English-speaking Canadians are intended to give the children a second language, not to replace English with French.

When the language of instruction is likely to replace the children's first language, this is called **subtractive bilingualism**.

see also IMMERSION PROGRAMME

address form *n*

also **address term, form/term of address**

the word or words used to address somebody in speech or writing. The way in which people address one another usually depends on their age, sex, social group, and personal relationship.

For example, many languages have different second person pronoun forms which are used according to whether the speaker wants to address someone politely or more informally, e.g. in German *Sie – du*, in French *vous – tu*, in Spanish *usted – tu* and in Mandarin Chinese *nín – nǐ* (you).

If a language has only one second person pronoun form, e.g. English *you*, other address forms are used to show formality or informality, e.g. *Sir, Mr Brown, Brown, Bill*. In some languages, such as Chinese dialects and Japanese, words expressing relationship, e.g. father, mother, aunt, or position, e.g. teacher, lecturer, are used as address forms to show respect and/or signal the formality of the situation, for example:

Mandarin Chinese: *bàba qíng cǐ*
father please eat!

Japanese: *sensei dozo!* (a polite request)
teacher/sir please!

The address forms of a language are arranged into a complex **address system** with its own rules which need to be acquired if a person wants to communicate appropriately.

see also COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

address system *n*

see ADDRESS FORM

address term *n*

see ADDRESS FORM

ad hoc interpreting *n*

informal translation of spoken interaction, for example during social events or business meetings.

see also INTERPRETATION

adjacency pair

adjacency pair *n*

a sequence of two related utterances by two different speakers. The second utterance is always a response to the first.

In the following example, speaker A makes a complaint, and speaker B replies with a denial:

A: *You left the light on.*

B: *It wasn't me!*

The sequence of *complaint* – *denial* is an adjacency pair. Other examples of adjacency pairs are *greeting* – *greeting*, *question* – *answer*, *invitation* – *acceptance/non-acceptance*, *offer* – *acceptance/non-acceptance*, *complaint* – *apology*.

Adjacency pairs are part of the structure of conversation and are studied in CONVERSATION ANALYSIS.

adjacency parameter *n*

(in GOVERNMENT/BINDING THEORY) the parameter by which a language does or does not exhibit the ADJACENCY PRINCIPLE.

adjacency principle *n*

(in GOVERNMENT/BINDING THEORY) the principle that a complement that can be assigned case (see CASE ASSIGNER) must occur adjacent to the head of its phrase and cannot be separated from it by other material. For example, a transitive verb in English must not be separated from its direct object: *She liked very much him. The principle does not apply to such languages as French, in which *J'aime beaucoup la France* (literally 'I love very much France') is the unmarked word order.

adjectival noun *n*

an adjective used as a noun, e.g. *the poor*, *the rich*, *the sick*, *the old*.

see also SUBSTANTIVE

adjective *n*

a word that describes the thing, quality, state, or action which a noun refers to. For example *black* in *a black hat* is an adjective. In English, adjectives usually have the following properties:

a they can be used before a noun, e.g. a heavy bag

b they can be used after *be*, *become*, *seem*, etc. as complements, e.g. the bag is heavy

c they can be used after a noun as a complement, e.g. these books make the bag heavy

d they can be modified by an adverb, e.g. a very heavy bag

e they can be used in a comparative or superlative form, e.g. the bag seems heavier now.

see also COMPLEMENT, COMPARATIVE, ATTRIBUTIVE ADJECTIVE

adjective complement *n*

see COMPLEMENT

adjective phrase *n*

a phrase that functions as an adjective. For example,

The woman in the corner is from Italy.

adjunct *n*

ADVERBIALS may be classified as adjuncts, conjuncts, or disjuncts. An **adjunct** is part of the basic structure of the clause or sentence in which it occurs, and modifies the verb. Adverbs of time, place, frequency, degree, and manner, are examples of adjuncts.

He died in England.

I have almost finished.

Conjuncts are not part of the basic structure of a clause or sentence. They show how what is said in the sentence containing the conjunct connects with what is said in another sentence or sentences.

Altogether it was a happy week.

However the weather was not good.

Disjuncts (also called **sentential adverbs**) are adverbs which show the speaker's attitude to or evaluation of what is said in the rest of the sentence.

Naturally, I paid for my own meal.

I had to pay for my own meal, unfortunately.

see also ADVERB

adjunct course *n*

in teaching language for academic purposes, an approach to Content Based Instruction in which a language course is linked with a content course in an academic area, such as an English course that is linked to a course in economics. The adjunct course is designed to give students the language skills necessary for success in the content course.

adjunction *n*

(in GENERATIVE GRAMMAR) a process by which one CONSTITUENT, such as a word or phrase is adjoined or attached to another to form an extended constituent.

admissions test

For example, in the sentence *He shouldn't do that*, we can say that the negative *not* (in contracted form) has been adjoined to the auxiliary *should* to form the extended auxiliary *shouldn't*.

Adjunction is governed by rules that may vary from language to language.

admissions test *n*

also **screening test**

a test designed to provide information about a test taker's likely success in a particular programme before entry into the programme in order to decide whether to admit the applicant or not, thus also called a screening test.

adnominal *n, adj*

a word or phrase which occurs next to a noun and which gives further information about it.

For example, an adnominal may be:

a an adjective,

e.g. *blue* in *the blue sea*

b another noun,

e.g. *jade* in *the jade statue*

c a phrase,

e.g. *at the corner* in *the shop at the corner*.

An adnominal is a type of MODIFIER.

adolescent learner *n*

see YOUNG LEARNER

adposition *n*

a cover term for PREPOSITION and postposition.

adult learner *n*

see YOUNG LEARNER

advance organizer *n*

(in teaching) an activity which helps students organize their thoughts and ideas as a preparation for learning or studying something. For example, a discussion which takes place before students listen to a lecture and which is intended to help them follow the lecture more easily, or a preview of the main ideas covered in a reading passage before reading it.

adverb *n*

a word that describes or adds to the meaning of a verb, an adjective, another adverb, or a sentence, and which answers such questions as *how?*, *where?*, or *when?*. In English many adverbs have an -ly ending.

For example, **adverbs of manner** e.g. *carefully, slowly*, **adverbs of place** e.g. *here, there, locally*, and **adverbs of time** e.g. *now, hourly, yesterday*.

A phrase or clause which functions as an adverb is called an **adverb phrase/adverb clause**.

see also ADVERBIAL, ADVERB PARTICLE, ADVERBIAL CLAUSE, ADJUNCT

adverbial *n, adj*

any word, phrase, or clause that functions like an ADVERB. An adverb is a single-word adverbial.

adverbial clause *n*

a clause which functions as an adverb.

For example:

When I arrived I went straight to my room. (adverbial clause of time)

Wherever we looked there was dust. (adverbial clause of place)

We painted the walls yellow to brighten the room. (adverbial clause of purpose)

see also ADVERB, PREPOSITION

adverbial phrase *n*

a phrase that functions as an adverb. For example,

After dinner we went to the movies.

adverb particle *n*

also **prepositional adverb**

a word such as *in, on, back*, when it modifies a verb rather than a noun.

Words like *in, out, up, down, on*, may belong grammatically with both nouns (e.g. *in the box, on the wall*) and verbs (e.g. *come in, eat up, wake up, die away*). When they are linked with nouns they are known as PREPOSITIONS and when they are linked with verbs they are known as adverb particles.

The combination of verb+adverb particle is known as a PHRASAL VERB.

advocacy *n*

in education, the process of promoting change through demonstrating to others that proposed changes are desirable, feasible, affordable, and appropriate. In planning or implementing curriculum and other kinds of educational changes it is often necessary to gain the support of influential people or groups who have resources, power, or authority to facilitate proposed changes. Advocacy may include political action and lobbying but also involves understanding the attitudes and positions of key decision-makers and STAKEHOLDERS and informing them of information and arguments to

affect

persuade them of the educational, social, economic and other benefits of proposed changes. See also **SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS**.

affect *n*

a term referring to a number of emotional factors that may influence language learning and use. These include basic personality traits such as shyness, long-term but changeable factors such as positive and negative **LANGUAGE ATTITUDES**, and constantly fluctuating states such as enthusiasm, **ANXIETY**, boredom, apathy, or elation. One theory suggests that affective states are largely determined by the balance between the subjectively assessed level of challenge in an activity and the subjectively assessed level of skill that one brings to that activity. For example, when faced with classroom tasks that are much higher than their level of skill, language learners feel anxious and frustrated; when given tasks that are well below their ability level, they feel bored; giving learners interesting tasks that are challenging but within their ability is most likely to elicit a positive affective response.

affected object *n*

see **OBJECT OF RESULT**

affective domain *n*

see **DOMAIN**³

affective filter hypothesis *n*

a hypothesis proposed by Krashen and associated with his monitor model of second language development (see **MONITOR HYPOTHESIS**). The hypothesis is based on the theory of an **affective filter**, which states that successful second language acquisition depends on the learner's feelings. Negative attitudes (including a lack of motivation or self-confidence and anxiety) are said to act as a filter, preventing the learner from making use of **INPUT**, and thus hindering success in language learning.

affective filtering *n*

the selection of one variety of speech as a model for learning the language in preference to other possible models because of affective factors. For example, second language learners might hear English spoken by many different groups (e.g. parents, teachers, different social and ethnic groups) but model their own speech on only one of these, such as the speech of their friends of the same group (= their **PEER GROUP**).

affective meaning *n*

another term for **CONNOTATION**

affective variable *n*

see COGNITIVE VARIABLE

affirmative *adj*

a grammatical construction that expresses a positive meaning, in contrast to a negative construction.

The plane has arrived. (affirmative)

The plane has not arrived. (negative)

affix *n*

a letter or sound, or group of letters or sounds (= a MORPHEME), which is added to a word, and which changes the meaning or function of the word.

Affixes are BOUND FORMS that can be added:

a to the beginning of a word (= a **prefix**), e.g. English *un-* which usually changes the meaning of a word to its opposite: *kind – unkind*

b to the end of a word (= a **suffix**), e.g. English *-ness* which usually changes an adjective into a noun: *kind – kindness*

c within a word (= an **infix**), e.g. Tagalog *-um-* which shows that a verb is in the past tense: *sulat* “to write” – *sumulat* “wrote”

see also COMBINING FORM

African American English *n*

also AAE, African American Vernacular English (AAVE), Black English (BE), Black English Vernacular (BEV), Ebonics

a variety of English spoken by some African Americans, particularly those living in concentrated urban areas. There are conflicting views on the origin of African American English. Some claim that is similar to varieties of English spoken by whites in the southern states (therefore, clearly a dialect of English), while others consider it to be a CREOLE, independently developed from Standard English and more deserving of the word LANGUAGE than that of DIALECT.

African American English has been the focus of national attention in the US beginning with the onset of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. AAE has sometimes been erroneously linked with inferior genetic intelligence, cultural deprivation, or laziness and viewed as an educational problem. However, researchers have shown that AAE has a structure and system of its own, no less complex than other language varieties. Some of the differences between AAE and Standard American English (SAE) are:

In phonology, AAE makes use of an l-deletion rule, creating identical pairs such as *toll* and *toe*, and a consonant cluster simplification rule that creates identical pairs such as *pass* and *passed*.

African American Vernacular English (AAVE)

In syntax, AAE speakers can delete the verb *to be* in the same environments in which SAE permits *to be* contracted, for example the verb *is* in *He is nice* can be contracted to *He's nice* in SAE and deleted (*He nice*) in AAE.

In semantics, AAE speakers can make distinctions that are not easily made in SAE. For example, the invariant form *be* in *John be happy* conveys the idea that John is always happy (a different meaning from *John is happy* or *John happy*), and the sentence *John BEEN married* (with stress on *been*) conveys the idea that John has been married for a long time (not that he has been married but perhaps is not now).

African American Vernacular English (AAVE) *n*

another term for AFRICAN AMERICAN ENGLISH

affricate *n* affricated *adj*

a speech sound (a CONSONANT) which is produced by stopping the airstream from the lungs, and then slowly releasing it with friction. The first part of an affricate is similar to a STOP, the second part is similar to a FRICATIVE.

For example, in English the /tʃ/ in /tʃaɪld/ *child*, and the /dʒ/ in /dʒæm/ *jam* are affricates.

see also MANNER OF ARTICULATION, PLACE OF ARTICULATION

agency *n*

a philosophical term referring to the capacity for human beings to make choices and take responsibility for their decisions and actions. Agency, together with its connections to IDENTITY and societal context, is an important construct in SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY and CRITICAL PEDAGOGY.

agent *n*

(in some grammars) the noun or noun phrase which refers to the person or animal which performs the action of the verb.

For example, in the English sentences:

Anthea cut the grass.

The grass was cut by Anthea.

Anthea is the agent.

The term agent is sometimes used only for the noun or noun phrase which follows *by* in passive sentences, even if it does not refer to the performer of an action, e.g. *everyone* in *She was admired by everyone*.

see also SUBJECT, AGENTIVE CASE, AGENTIVE OBJECT

agentive case *n*

(in CASE GRAMMAR) the noun or noun phrase that refers to the person or animal who performs or initiates the action of the verb is in the agentive case.

For example, in:

Tom pruned the roses.

Tom is in the agentive case.

But the subject of the verb is not necessarily always in the agentive case. In the sentence:

Tom loves roses.

Tom does not perform an action, but his attitude to roses is mentioned.

Tom in this sentence is therefore not agentive but dative (see DATIVE CASE²).

see also CASE GRAMMAR

agentive object *n*

the object of a verb which itself performs the action of the verb.

For example, in the sentence:

Fred galloped the horse.

Fred initiates the action, but it is *the horse* which actually gallops.

see also AGENT, AGENTIVE CASE

agent θ -role *n*

see under θ -THEORY/THETA THEORY

agglutinating language *n*

also agglutinative language

a language in which various AFFIXES may be added to the stem of a word to add to its meaning or to show its grammatical function.

For example, in Swahili *wametulipa* “they have paid us” consists of:

wa me tu lipa

they + perfective marker + us + pay

Languages which are highly agglutinating include Finnish, Hungarian, Swahili, and Turkish, although there is no clear-cut distinction between agglutinating languages, INFLECTING LANGUAGES, and ISOLATING LANGUAGES.

Sometimes agglutinating languages and inflecting languages are called *synthetic languages*.

AGR *n*

see AGREEMENT

agrammatism *n*

see APHASIA

agraphia *n*

see APHASIA

agreement

agreement¹ *n*

in general, two elements agree if they have at least one feature in common. For example, in English the third person singular subject *John* in the sentence *John goes to work early* must be followed by the form of the verb *go* that is also marked for third person singular. In some languages, such as Spanish and Arabic, adjectives must agree in both gender and number with the nouns they modify. A traditional term for agreement is CONCORD.

In GOVERNMENT/BINDING THEORY, agreement is considered to be the relation between a specifier head (**AGR**) and its specifier. Agreement in this sense includes both subject-verb agreement and assignment of structural case.

agreement² *n*

another term for CONCORD

AI *n*

an abbreviation for ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AILA *n*

an abbreviation for **Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée/ International Association of Applied Linguistics**

aim *n*

see OBJECTIVE

alertness *n*

see ATTENTION

alexia *n*

see APHASIA

algorithm *n*

an explicit set of instructions that specify in detail the steps to go through in order to perform some operation. For example, changing a declarative sentence such as *She went to the store* into an interrogative sentence *Where did she go?* according to a series of steps as a classroom exercise is an example of applying an algorithm.

alienable possession *n*

see INALIENABLE POSSESSION

alliteration *n*

the repetition of an initial sound, usually a consonant, in two or more words that occur close together. For example:

Down the drive dashed dashing Dan.

allomorph *n*

any of the different forms of a MORPHEME.

For example, in English the plural morpheme is often shown in writing by adding -s to the end of a word, e.g. *cat* /kæt/ – *cats* /kæts/. Sometimes this plural morpheme is pronounced /z/, e.g. *dog* /dɒg/ – *dogs* /dɒgz/, and sometimes it is pronounced /ɪz/, e.g. *class* /klɑːs/ – *classes* /ˈklɑːsɪz/.

/s/, /z/, and /ɪz/ all have the same grammatical function in these examples, they all show plural; they are all allomorphs of the plural morpheme.

allophone *n* **allophonic** *adj*

any of the different variants of a phoneme. The different allophones of a phoneme are perceptibly different but similar to each other, do not change the meaning of a word, and occur in different phonetic environments that can be stated in terms of phonological rules. For example, the English phoneme /p/ is **aspirated** (see **ASPIRATION**) when it occurs at the beginning of a syllable (as in *pot*) but **unaspirated** when it is preceded by /s/ (as in *spot*) and may be **unreleased** when it occurs at the end of an utterance (as in “he’s not her *type*”). These aspirated, unaspirated, and unreleased sounds are all heard and identified as the phoneme /p/ and not as /b/; they are all allophones of /p/.

alpha (α) *n*

another term for **SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL**

alphabet *n* **alphabetic** *adj*

a set of letters which are used to write a language.

The English alphabet uses roman script and consists of 26 letters – a, b, c, etc.

The Russian alphabet uses cyrillic script and consists of 31 letters – а, б, в, etc.

The Arabic alphabet uses arabic script and consists of 29 letters – أ, ب, ت, etc.

see also **ALPHABETIC WRITING**

alphabetic method *n*

a method of teaching children to read. It is used in teaching reading in the mother tongue.

alphabetic writing

Children are taught the names of the letters of the alphabet – *a* “ay”, *b* “bee”, *c* “see”, etc. – and when they see a new or unfamiliar word, e.g. *bag*, they repeat the letter names – “bee ay gee”. It is thought that this “spelling” of the word helps the child to recognize it.

see also PHONICS

alphabetic writing *n*

a writing system made up of separate letters which represent sounds (see ALPHABET).

Some examples of alphabetic writing systems are:

- a* Roman (or Latin) script, used for many European languages including English. It has also been adopted for many non-European languages, e.g. Swahili, Indonesian and Turkish.
- b* Arabic script, used for Arabic and languages such as Persian, Urdu and Malay, which also uses roman script.
- c* Cyrillic script, used for Russian and languages such as Ukrainian and Bulgarian.

see also IDIOGRAPHIC WRITING, SYLLABIC WRITING

alpha (α) error *n*

see TYPE I ERROR

ALTE *n*

an abbreviation for Association of Language Testers in Europe

alternate form reliability *n*

also **equivalent form reliability, parallel form reliability**

one approach to estimate the RELIABILITY of a test. In this approach, two or more forms of a test that are different but equivalent in content and difficulty are administered to the same group of test takers. Then a CORRELATION COEFFICIENT between the total scores of the alternate forms of the test is calculated. The resulting correlation coefficient is interpreted as a numerical index of the extent to which the alternate forms are equivalent to each other or consistent in measuring test takers' abilities. For practical reasons, however, this method of assessing test reliability is used less frequently than an INTERNAL CONSISTENCY RELIABILITY approach.

alternate forms *n*

also **equivalent forms, parallel forms**

two or more different forms of a test designed to measure exactly the same skills or abilities, which use the same methods of testing, and which are of equal length and difficulty.

In general, if test takers receive similar scores on alternate forms of a test, this suggests that the test is reliable (see RELIABILITY).

alternate response item *n*

see TEST ITEM

alternation *n* **alternant** *n*

the relationship between the different forms of a linguistic unit is called alternation. The term is used especially in MORPHOLOGY and in PHONOLOGY. For example, the related vowels /i:/ and /e/ in:

deceive /dɪ'si:v/ *deception* /dɪ'sepʃən/

receive /rɪ'si:v/ *reception* /rɪ'sepʃən/

are in alternation.

The ALLOPHONES of a PHONEME and the ALLOMORPHS of a MORPHEME are also in alternation, or alternants.

alternation rules *n*

see SPEECH STYLES

alternative *n*

see MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEM

alternative assessment *n*

various types of assessment procedures that are seen as alternatives or complements to traditional standardized testing. Traditional modes of assessment are thought not to capture important information about test takers' abilities in a L2 and are also not thought to reflect real-life conditions. Procedures used in alternative assessment include self-assessment, peer assessment, portfolios, learner diaries or journals, student–teacher conferences, interviews, and observation.

see AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT, PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

alternative hypothesis *n*

see HYPOTHESIS

alveolar *adj*

describes a speech sound (a CONSONANT) which is produced by the front of the tongue touching or nearly touching the gum ridge behind the upper teeth (the **alveolar ridge**).

For example, in English the /t/ in /tɪn/ *tin*, and the /d/ in /dɪn/ *din* are alveolar STOPS.

alveolar ridge

In English alveolar stops are made with the tip of the tongue, but alveolar FRICATIVES – the /s/ in /sɪp/ *sip*, and the /z/ in /zu:/ *zoo* – are made with the part of the tongue which is just behind the tip, the blade.

see also LAMINAL, PLACE OF ARTICULATION, MANNER OF ARTICULATION

alveolar ridge *n*

also **alveolum**

see PLACE OF ARTICULATION

ambi-bilingualism *n*

the ability to function equally well in two or more languages across a wide range of domains.

ambiguous *adj* **ambiguity** *n*

a word, phrase, or sentence which has more than one meaning is said to be ambiguous.

An example of **grammatical ambiguity** is the sentence:

The lamb is too hot to eat.

which can mean either:

a the lamb is so hot that it cannot eat anything

or:

b the cooked lamb is too hot for someone to eat it

There are several types of **lexical ambiguity**:

a a word can have several meanings, e.g. *face* meaning “human face”, “face of a clock”, “cliff face” (see also POLYSEMY)

b two or more words can sound the same but have different meanings, e.g. *bank* in *to put money in a bank*, *the bank of a river* (see also HOMONYMS³)

Usually, additional information either from the speaker or writer or from the situation indicates which meaning is intended.

Ambiguity is used extensively in creative writing, especially in poetry.

see also DISAMBIGUATION

Ameslan *n*

an acronym for American Sign Language

see SIGN LANGUAGE

amygdala *n*

a part of the brain believed to be important in directing ATTENTION and attaching emotional value to stimuli.

analogy *n*

also OVERGENERALIZATION

in language learning, a process by which unknown forms are constructed according to the pattern of other forms that the learner knows. For example, knowing that the past tense of *sing* is *sang*, a learner might guess by analogy that the past tense of *fling* is *flang*.

analysis of covariance *n*

a statistical procedure (similar to ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE) used to statistically equate groups in order to control the effects of one or more variables, called COVARIATES in this type of analysis. For example, if we were comparing the effect of a teaching method on three groups of participants, and one group had a higher MEAN IQ than the others, analysis of covariance could be used to make the groups equivalent by adjusting the effects of IQ. see also ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

analysis of variance *n*

a statistical procedure for testing whether the difference among the MEANS of two or more groups is significant, for example, to compare the effectiveness of a teaching method on three different age groups. see also ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

analytic approach *n*

see SYNTHETIC APPROACH

analytic induction *n*

(in QUALITATIVE RESEARCH), the process of taking one case of data, developing a working hypothesis to explain it, examining additional cases to see if the hypothesis explains them, revising the hypothesis as appropriate, and searching for negative cases to disprove the hypothesis. Although not all qualitative research follows this approach, this inductive cyclical approach to data analysis and theory building has been highly influential.

analytic language *n*

another term for ISOLATING LANGUAGE

analytic scoring *n*

in testing, a method of scoring that separates and weights different features of the test taker's performance on a writing or speaking task and assigns separate scores to each feature. The commonly analyzed features in writing tasks include content, organization, cohesion, style, register, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and mechanics, whereas those in speaking tasks include pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and appropriateness. see also HOLISTIC SCORING

analytic style

analytic style *n*

see GLOBAL LEARNING

anaphora *n* **anaphor** *n* **anaphoric** *adj*

a process where a word or phrase (**anaphor**) refers back to another word or phrase which was used earlier in a text or conversation.

For example, in:

Tom likes ice cream but Bill can't eat it.

the word *it* refers back to *ice cream*: it is a substitute for *ice cream*, which is called the ANTECEDENT of *it*.

Some verbs may be anaphoric, for example the verb *do* in:

Mary works hard and so does Doris.

does is anaphoric and is a substitute for *works*.

In BINDING THEORY the term *anaphor* refers to a somewhat different concept and is subject to certain restrictions (see under BINDING PRINCIPLE).

ANCOVA *n*

an abbreviation for ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

animate noun *n*

a noun which refers to a living being, for example persons, animals, fish, etc.

For example, the English nouns *woman* and *fish* are animate nouns.

Nouns like *stone* and *water* are called inanimate nouns.

see also SEMANTIC FEATURES

anomia *n*

see APHASIA

anomie *n*

also **anomy**

feelings of social uncertainty or dissatisfaction which people who do not have strong attachments to a particular social group may have. Anomie has been studied as an affective variable (see COGNITIVE VARIABLE) in second/foreign language learning. In learning a new language people may begin to move away from their own language and culture, and have feelings of insecurity. At the same time they may not be sure about their feelings towards the new language group. Feelings of anomie may be highest when a high level of language ability is reached. This may lead a person to look for chances to speak their own language as a relief.

ANOVA *n*

an abbreviation for ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

antecedent *n*

see ANAPHORA

anthropological linguistics *n*

a branch of linguistics which studies the relationship between language and culture in a community, e.g. its traditions, beliefs, and family structure. For example, anthropological linguists have studied the ways in which relationships within the family are expressed in different cultures (kinship terminology), and they have studied how people communicate with one another at certain social and cultural events, e.g. ceremonies, rituals, and meetings, and then related this to the overall structure of the particular community.

Some areas of anthropological linguistics are closely related to areas of SOCIOLINGUISTICS and the ETHNOGRAPHY OF COMMUNICATION.

anticipation error *n*

see SPEECH ERRORS

anticipatory coarticulation *n*

see ASSIMILATION

anticipatory structure *n*

a structure that refers forward to information contained later in a sentence.

It surprised me to learn that she was only 21.

It's not until next week that we will be able to meet.

anticipatory subject *n*

see EXTRAPOSITION

anti-cognitive theory *n*

see COGNITIVE THEORY

anti-essentialism *n*

see ESSENTIALISM

antonym *n* antonymy *n*

a word which is opposite in meaning to another word. For example, in English *dead* and *alive*, and *big* and *small* are antonyms.

A distinction is sometimes made between pairs like *dead* and *alive*, and pairs like *big* and *small*, according to whether or not the words are gradable (see GRADABLE).

anxiety

A person who is not *dead* must be *alive*, but something which is not *big* is not necessarily *small*, it may be somewhere between the two sizes. *Dead* and *alive* are called **complementaries** (or ungradable antonyms); *big* and *small* are called gradable antonyms or a **gradable pair**.

Some linguists use the term antonym to mean only gradable pairs.

see also SYNONYM

anxiety *n*

see LANGUAGE ANXIETY

a-parameter *n*

see ITEM RESPONSE THEORY

apex *n*

the tip of the tongue

see also APICAL, PLACE OF ARTICULATION

aphasia *n* **aphasic** *adj*

also **dysphasia**

loss of the ability to use and understand language, usually caused by damage to the brain. The loss may be total or partial, and may affect spoken and/or written language ability.

There are different types of aphasia: **agraphia** is difficulty in writing; **alexia** is difficulty in reading; **anomia** is difficulty in using proper nouns; and **agrammatism** is difficulty in using grammatical words like prepositions, articles, etc.

Aphasia can be studied in order to discover how the brain processes language.

see also NEUROLINGUISTICS

apical *adj*

describes a speech sound (a CONSONANT) which is produced by the tip of the tongue (the apex) touching some part of the mouth.

For example, in English the /t/ in /tin/ *tin* is an apical STOP.

If the tongue touches the upper teeth, the sounds are sometimes called apico-dental, e.g. French and German /t/ and /d/. If the tongue touches the gum ridge behind the upper teeth (the alveolar ridge), the sounds are sometimes called apico-alveolar, e.g. English /t/ and /d/.

see also PLACE OF ARTICULATION, MANNER OF ARTICULATION

a posteriori syllabus *n*

see A PRIORI SYLLABUS

apostrophe *n*

the ending 's which is added to nouns in English to indicate possession. For example:

Michael's son

The director's car.

applied linguistics *n*

- 1 the study of second and foreign language learning and teaching.
- 2 the study of language and linguistics in relation to practical problems, such as LEXICOGRAPHY, TRANSLATION, SPEECH PATHOLOGY, etc. Applied linguistics uses information from sociology, psychology, anthropology, and INFORMATION THEORY as well as from linguistics in order to develop its own theoretical models of language and language use, and then uses this information and theory in practical areas such as syllabus design, SPEECH THERAPY, LANGUAGE PLANNING, STYLISTICS, etc.

applied research *n*

research designed to produce practical applications, contrasted with basic research, i.e. research that is designed to generate knowledge or validate theories that may not have any direct application. ACTION RESEARCH is a form of applied research. Second language acquisition is considered a type of applied research by some and basic research by others.

apposition *n* **appositive** *n, adj*

When two words, phrases, or clauses in a sentence have the same REFERENCE, they are said to be in apposition. For example, in the sentence:

My sister, Helen Wilson, will travel with me.

My sister and *Helen Wilson* refer to the same person, and are called appositives.

The sentence can be rewritten with either of the two appositives missing, and still make sense:

My sister will travel with me.

Helen Wilson will travel with me.

appraisal system *n*

- 1 in language teaching, procedures that an institution, school or organization has in place to provide for regular review and assessment of teachers' performance. Appraisal may include appraisal by a supervisor, by a colleague, by students, or self-appraisal.
- 2 in NEUROLINGUISTICS, a brain-system that evaluates stimuli (such as a target language) in terms of such criteria as novelty, relevance, coping ability, and self- and social-image.

appraisal theory

appraisal theory *n*

a developing area within discourse analysis and conversation analysis and associated with Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. Appraisal theory is concerned with the way speakers convey attitudinal meaning during conversation. It deals with the way speakers communicate such attitudes as certainty, emotional response, social evaluation, and intensity. Appraisal is mainly realized lexically, although it can also be realized by whole clauses.

appreciative comprehension *n*

see READING

apprenticeship of observation *n*

the understanding of teaching that student teachers bring with them to a teacher training course based on the thousands of hours they have spent observing and experiencing different forms of teaching as school children. A focus of teacher education programmes is therefore to explore ideas and beliefs about teaching and learning that pre-service teachers bring with them, and the extent to which these ideas affect their willingness or ability to acquire new understandings of teaching.

approach *n*

in language teaching, the theory, philosophy and principles underlying a particular set of teaching practices.

Language teaching is sometimes discussed in terms of three related aspects: approach, METHOD, and **technique**.

Different theories about the nature of language and how languages are learned (the approach) imply different ways of teaching language (the method), and different methods make use of different kinds of classroom activity (the technique).

Examples of different approaches are the aural–oral approach (see AUDIO-LINGUAL METHOD), the COGNITIVE CODE APPROACH, the COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH, etc. Examples of different methods which are based on a particular approach are the AUDIOLINGUAL METHOD, the DIRECT METHOD, etc. Examples of techniques used in particular methods are DRILLS, DIALOGUES, ROLE-PLAYS, sentence completion, etc.

appropriateness *n* appropriate *adj*

the extent to which a use of language matches the linguistic and sociolinguistic expectations and practices of native speakers of the language. When producing an utterance, a speaker needs to know that it is grammatical, and also that it is suitable (appropriate) for the particular situation.

For example:

Give me a glass of water!

is grammatical, but it would not be appropriate if the speaker wanted to be polite. A request such as:

May I have a glass of water, please?

would be more appropriate.

see also GRAMMATICAL^{1,2}, CORRECT, COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

appropriate word method *n*

see CLOZE TEST

appropriation *n*

in second language learning, the processes by which language learners make the characteristics of one language and culture their own by adapting it to their own needs and interests. For example the ways in which speakers of Singapore and Malaysian English have made this variety of English distinctive and unique through incorporating features from Chinese, as with the use of a final sentence particle “lah” in informal speech, as in “My turn to pay for lunch today lah!”.

approximant *n*

a sound produced by the approach of one articulator towards another but without the vocal tract being narrowed so much that a turbulent airstream is produced. English /r, l, y, w/ are approximants and can be further subdivided into SEMIVOWELS or GLIDES (/y/ and /w/) and LIQUIDS (/l/ and /r/).

approximative system *n*

see INTERLANGUAGE

a priori syllabus *n*

in language teaching, a distinction is sometimes made between two kinds of syllabuses. A syllabus prepared in advance of a course, and used as a basis for developing classroom activities, may be referred to as an a priori syllabus. This may be contrasted with a syllabus which is not developed in advance but which is prepared after a course is taught, as a “record” of the language and activities used in the course (an a posteriori syllabus). And an a posteriori syllabus is sometimes called a retrospective syllabus.

see also SYLLABUS

aptitude *n*

see LANGUAGE APTITUDE

aptitude test *n*

see LANGUAGE APTITUDE TEST

aptitude-treatment interaction

aptitude-treatment interaction *n*

the relationship between a learner's personal strengths and weaknesses in learning and the learning situation, including the type of programme one is enrolled in. The study of such interactions is motivated by the idea that learners will learn best in a situation in which the demands of the classroom or other learning context match their areas of aptitude. For example, a learner with high ORAL MIMICRY ABILITY may learn better in one type of language programme, while one high in GRAMMATICAL SENSITIVITY may learn better in another.

archaism *n*

a word or phrase that is no longer used, such as the second person singular pronoun *thou*, or whose usage is limited to specific contexts, such as *thereof*, *hereto*, in legal documents.

areal linguistics *n*

the study of the languages or dialects which are spoken in a particular area. An example is a study of two neighbouring languages to see how they influence each other in terms of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc. see also DIALECTOLOGY

argument *n*

in LOGIC, the thing talked about (see PROPOSITION).

in GENERATIVE GRAMMAR, the thematic role of a noun in relation to a verb (see CASE THEORY, THETA THEORY).

argumentation *n*

see ESSAY

argumentative writing *n*

see MODES OF WRITING

article *n*

a word which is used with a noun, and which shows whether the noun refers to something definite or something indefinite.

For example, English has two articles: the **definite article** *the*, and the **indefinite article** *a* or *an*.

The main use of the definite article in English is to show that the noun refers to a particular example of something, e.g.:

a by referring to something which is known to both the speaker and the hearer:

She is in the garden.

He is at the post office.

- b* by referring backwards to something already mentioned:
There is a man waiting outside. Who, the man in the brown coat?
- c* by referring forward to something:
The chair in the living room is broken.
- d* by referring to something as a group or class:
The lion is a dangerous animal.

The main use of the indefinite article in English is to show that the noun refers to something general or to something which has not been identified by the speaker, e.g.:

- a* by referring to one example of a group or class:
Pass me a pencil, please.
- b* by referring to something as an example of a group or class:
A dog is a friendly animal.

When nouns are used without an article in English, this is sometimes called zero article. For example:

Cats like sleeping.

Silver is a precious metal,

see also DETERMINER

articulation *n* **articulate** *v*

the production of speech sounds in the mouth and throat (see VOCAL TRACT). In describing and analyzing speech sounds a distinction is made between the MANNER OF ARTICULATION and the PLACE OF ARTICULATION.

articulator *n*

a part of the mouth, nose, or throat which is used in producing speech, e.g. the tongue, lips, alveolar ridge, etc.

see also PLACE OF ARTICULATION

articulatory loop *n*

see WORKING MEMORY

articulatory phonetics *n*

see PHONETICS

articulatory setting *n*

the overall posture, position or characteristic movements of the organs of speech typical of a particular language or dialect. For example, speakers of English make much more active use of both lip and tongue movements than speakers of some languages (Japanese, for example), while Arabic has

artificial intelligence

many consonants formed towards the back of the oral cavity, producing an overall “heavier” velarized or pharyngealized sound (see VELARIZATION, PHARYNGEALIZATION).

artificial intelligence *n*

also **AI**

the ability of machines to carry out functions that are normally associated with human intelligence, such as reasoning, correcting, making self-improvements and learning through experience. Computer programmers try to create programs which have this capacity.

artificial language¹ *n*

also **auxiliary language**

a language which has been invented for a particular purpose, and which has no NATIVE SPEAKERS.

For example, Esperanto was invented by L. L. Zamenhof and was intended to be learned as a second language and used for international communication.

Artificial languages are also invented for experiments on aspects of natural language use.

see also NATURAL LANGUAGE

artificial language² *n*

in computer programming, a code system made up of symbols, numbers or signs, such as the programming language COBOL.

ASCII *n*

An abbreviation for **American Standard Code for Information Interchange**

aspect *n*

a term used to denote the activity, event, or state described by a verb, for example whether the activity is ongoing or completed. Two types of aspect are commonly recognized:

lexical aspect (or **inherent lexical aspect**) refers to the internal semantics of verbs, which can be grouped into a number of categories:

- 1 **states**, verbs that refer to unchanging conditions (see STATIVE VERB), for example *be, have, want*
- 2 **activities**, verbs referring to processes with no inherent beginning or end point, for example *play, walk, breathe*
- 3 **accomplishments**, which are **durative** (last for a period of time) but have an inherent end point, for example *read a book, write a novel*

4 **achievements**, which are nondurative and have an inherent end point, for example *finish, realize, arrive*.

grammatical aspect, on the other hand, refers to the resources provided by a language (such as verbal auxiliaries, prefixes and suffixes) to encode different perspectives taken by a speaker towards activities, events, and states. Languages make available different options for realizing aspect grammatically. English has two grammatical aspects: PROGRESSIVE and PERFECT.

see also TENSE¹

aspect hypothesis

see LEXICAL ASPECT HYPOTHESIS

Aspects Model *n*

see GENERATIVE THEORY

aspirate *v* aspirated *adj*

the very small puff of air that sometimes follows a speech sound.

For example, in English the /p/ is aspirated at the beginning of the word /pæn/ *pan*, but when it is preceded by an /s/, e.g. in /spæn/ *span* there is no puff of air. The /p/ in *span* is **unaspirated**.

In phonetic notation, aspiration is shown by the symbol [h] or ['], e.g. [p^hɪn] or [p'ɪn] *pin*.

Aspiration increases when a word or syllable is stressed, e.g.:

Ouch! I stepped on a PIN.

aspiration *n*

a puff of air (acoustically, a period of voicelessness) after the release of an articulation. For example, in English the stop consonants /p, t, k/ are **aspirated** when they are syllable initial, as in initial sounds of *pie, tie, kite*. When these phonemes are preceded by /s/, e.g. in *span, stairs, and skate*, there is no puff of air and these sounds are **unaspirated**.

Aspiration increases when a word or syllable is stressed. For example, in the phrase *a piece of pie*, aspiration is more noticeable in the word *pie* than in the word *piece*.

assessment *n*

a systematic approach to collecting information and making inferences about the ability of a student or the quality or success of a teaching course on the basis of various sources of evidence. Assessment may be done by test, interview, questionnaire, observation, etc. For example, assessment of the comprehension ability of an immigrant student may be necessary to

assessment criteria

discover if the student is able to follow a course of study in a school, or whether extra language teaching is needed. Students may be tested at the beginning and again at the end of a course to assess the quality of the teaching on the course. The term “testing” is often associated with large-scale standardized tests, whereas the term “assessment” is used in a much wider sense to mean a variety of approaches in testing and assessment.

see also TESTING

assessment criteria *n*

the features of a student’s performance on an activity which will be used as the basis for judging a student’s performance. For example in assessing a student’s writing, assessment criteria might include grammatical accuracy, punctuation, and organization of ideas.

assimilated word *n*

a word which was originally a *borrowing* from another language but which is now regarded as part of the native vocabulary of a language, such as *coffee*, which was originally a borrowed word from Arabic.

assimilation¹ *n*

a phonological process in which a speech sound changes and becomes more like or identical to another sound that precedes or follows it. For example, in English the negative PREFIX appears as *im-* before words beginning with a bilabial stop (e.g. *possible:impossible*) but as *in-* before words beginning with an alveolar stop (e.g. *tolerant:intolerant*).

Assimilation in which a following sound brings about a change in a preceding one is called **regressive assimilation** or **anticipatory coarticulation**. For example, the rounding of the lips during /s/ in *swim* is due to the anticipation of the lip action required for /w/.

Assimilation in which a preceding sound brings about a change in a following one is called **progressive** or **perseverative assimilation**. For example, the difference between the /s/ in words like *cats* and the /z/ in *dogs* and the difference between the final /t/ in *dropped* and the final /d/ in *praised* are examples of progressive assimilation because the final sound (/s/ or /z/, /t/ or /d/) depends on whether the preceding consonant is voiced or not.

A third type of assimilation, coalescent assimilation takes place when two sounds in a sequence come together to produce a sound with features from both original sounds. For example, the final alveolar stop /d/ of *could* and the initial palatal /y/ of *you* may coalesce to become a palatal AFFRICATE [dʒ] in a phrase like *could you?* This process is commonly referred to as **palatalization**.

assimilation² *n*

a process in which a group gradually gives up its own language, culture, and system of values and takes on those of another group with a different language, culture, and system of values, through a period of interaction.

see also ACCULTURATION, SOCIAL DISTANCE

assimilation³ *n*

see ADAPTATION²

associative learning *n*

learning which happens when a connection or association is made, usually between two things.

For example:

- a* When someone hears the word *table*, they may think of the word *food*, because this word is often used with or near *table*. This is called **association by contiguity**.
- b* When someone hears the word *delicate*, they may think of the word *fragile*, because it has a similar meaning. This is called **association by similarity**.
- c* When someone hears the word *happy*, they may think of the word *sad*, because it has the opposite meaning. This is called **association by contrast**.

Associative learning theory has been used in studies of memory, learning, and verbal learning.

see also VERBAL LEARNING, WORD ASSOCIATION, PAIRED-ASSOCIATE LEARNING

associative meaning *n*

the associative meaning of a word is the total of all the meanings a person thinks of when they hear the word.

For example, in a word association test a person might be given a word (a **stimulus**) and then asked to list all the things they think of (the **response**).

For example:

<u>stimulus</u>	<u>response</u>
<i>Puppy</i>	<i>warm</i>
	<i>young</i>
	<i>furry</i>
	<i>lively</i>
	<i>kitten</i>

warm, young, furry, lively, kitten make up the associative meaning of puppy for that person.

Associative meaning has been used in studies of memory and thought.

see also WORD ASSOCIATION, STIMULUS-RESPONSE THEORY

associative memory

associative memory *n*

a memory system that stores mappings of specific representations to inputs, outputs, and other representations. In CONNECTIONISM, a memory system that learns to reproduce input patterns as output patterns is called **autoassociative**.

asyllabic *adj*

see SYLLABLE

asynchronous communication *n*

in COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING, communication that is not instantaneous and can be accessed and read by the recipient at a later time. Language classes often use this type of communication in the form of bulletin boards or discussion lists.

see also SYNCHRONOUS COMMUNICATION

attention *n*

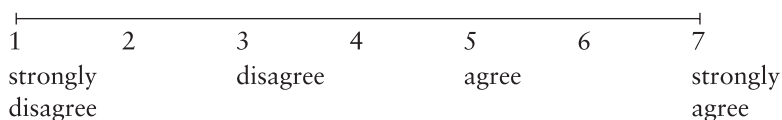
the ability a person has to concentrate on some things while ignoring others. Subsystems of attention that have been identified include **alertness** (an overall readiness to deal with incoming stimuli), **orientation** (the direction of attentional resources to certain types of stimuli), **detection** (cognitive registration of a particular stimulus), and **inhibition** (deliberately ignoring some stimuli). In SLA theory, it has been proposed that nothing can be learned from input without it being the object of some level of attention and detected; whether such detection must be conscious is controversial. **Sustained attention**, the ability to direct and focus cognitive activity on specific stimuli for a period of time, is necessary for such language tasks as reading a newspaper article or any complex sequenced action.

attitude *n*

see LANGUAGE ATTITUDES

attitude scale *n*

a technique for measuring a person's reaction to something. A common scale is the **Likert scale**. With this a statement of belief or attitude is shown to someone, and he or she is asked to show how strongly he or she agrees or disagrees with the statement by marking a scale like the one shown below:
Foreign languages are important for all educated adults.



attribution theory *n*

the theory that the causes people attribute to perceived successes and failures in their lives play a significant role in their subsequent level of MOTIVATION and behaviour. For example, learners may attribute their relative success or failure in language learning to such factors as ability, the classroom environment, good or poor teaching, interest, strategy use, support from others, etc. Attributions can be classified on the basis of **locus of control** (internal factors such as effort vs. external factors such as the textbook or teaching method), **stability** (stable factors such as personality vs. unstable factors such as mood), and **controllability** (controllable factors such as effort vs. uncontrollable factors such as language aptitude). Although there may be a **self-serving bias** that leads to ascribing success to internal factors and failures to external ones, it is generally believed that learners who attribute both success and failure to internal factors such as effort are most likely to maintain their motivation at a high level.

attributive adjective *n*

an adjective which is used before a noun.

For example, *good* in *a good book* is an attributive adjective.

An adjective which is used after a verb, especially after the verbs *be*, *become*, *seem*, etc. is called a **predicative adjective**. For example, *good* in *The book was very good*.

Many adjectives in English are like *good*, and can be used both attributively and predicatively, but some, like *main* and *utter*, can only be used attributively, e.g. *a busy main road*, *an utter fool*, and some, like *afraid* and *asleep*, can only be used predicatively e.g. *The boy was asleep*, *The dog seems afraid*.

Many nouns in English can also be used attributively, e.g. *paper* in *a paper cup*. Languages differ in the extent to which they use adjectives attributively, predicatively, or in both positions.

see also ADJECTIVE

attriters *n*

see LANGUAGE ATTRITION

attriting language *n*

see LANGUAGE ATTRITION

attrition *n*

see LANGUAGE ATTRITION

audience *n*

when writing any type of text, the writer's understanding of the readers for whom the text is intended. The writer's understanding of the readers'

audio journal

beliefs, values and understandings can have an influence on how the writer structures the text and the features the writer includes in it. Good writing is said to reflect the writer's consideration of the audience.

audio journal *n*

also **tape journal *n***

a technique for giving feedback on a student's spoken language in which the student receives personalized feedback on his or her performance based on short student recordings, done individually at home or out of class. Audio journals may be regarded as the spoken equivalent of a writing journal.

audiolingual method *n*

also **audiolingualism**, **aural–oral method**, **mim–mem method**

a method of foreign or second language teaching which (a) emphasizes the teaching of speaking and listening before reading and writing (b) uses DIALOGUES and DRILLS (c) discourages use of the mother tongue in the classroom (d) often makes use of CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS. The audiolingual method was prominent in the 1950s and 1960s, especially in the United States, and has been widely used in many other parts of the world.

The theory behind the audiolingual method is the **aural–oral approach** to language teaching, which contains the following beliefs about language and language learning: (a) speaking and listening are the most basic language skills (b) each language has its own unique structure and rule system (c) a language is learned through forming habits. These ideas were based partly on the theory of STRUCTURAL LINGUISTICS and partly on BEHAVIOURISM. Criticism of the audiolingual method is based on criticism of its theory and its techniques (see COGNITIVE CODE APPROACH, COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH). see also APPROACH, MIM–MEM METHOD

audiology *n*

the study of hearing and hearing disorders, particularly the nature of hearing loss and the treatment of people suffering from hearing disorders.

audio-script *n*

also **tape script**

In language teaching course books and materials, a printed text containing a transcript of spoken dialogues and other spoken texts occurring in the course-book's audio or video components.

audio-visual aid *n*

an audio or visual device used by a teacher to help learning. For example, pictures, charts, and flashcards are visual aids; radio, records, and tape-recorders are auditory aids. Film, television, and video are audio-visual aids.

audio-visual method *n*

also **structural global method**

a method of foreign language teaching which was developed in France in the 1950s and which

a teaches speaking and listening before reading and writing

b does not use the mother tongue in the classroom

c uses recorded dialogues with film-strip picture sequences to present language items

d uses drills to teach basic grammar and vocabulary.

The audio-visual method is based on the belief that

a language is learned through communication

b translation can be avoided if new language items are taught in situations

c choice of items for teaching should be based on a careful analysis of the language being taught.

see also AUDIOLINGUAL METHOD

auditing *n*

see DEPENDABILITY

auditory *adj*

of or related to hearing.

auditory discrimination *n*

the ability to hear and recognize the different sounds in a language. In particular the ability to recognize the different PHONEMES, and the different STRESS and INTONATION patterns.

see also PERCEPTION

auditory feedback *n*

when a person speaks, they can hear what they are saying, and can use this information to monitor their speech and to correct any mistakes. This is called auditory feedback.

For example, in the following utterance the speaker uses auditory feedback to correct his/her pronunciation:

Would you like a cup of cea or toffee – I mean tea or coffee?

see also FEEDBACK, DELAYED AUDITORY FEEDBACK, KINESTHETIC FEEDBACK

auditory learner *n*

a learner whose preferred learning style is to learn by listening, rather than learning in some other way, such as by reading.

See also COGNITIVE STYLE/LEARNING STYLE, KINAESTHETIC LEARNER, VISUAL LEARNER

auditory/oral method

auditory/oral method *n*

a method for educating deaf or HEARING-IMPAIRED children which relies on using their remaining or **residual hearing** and hearing aids. Best results are achieved through early diagnosis of the hearing loss and the use of normal language input. This is said to allow children to acquire normal language rules, and to maximize the opportunity for the learning of PROSODIC and SUPRASEGMENTAL FEATURES of speech.

auditory perception *n*

see PERCEPTION

auditory phonetics *n*

see PHONETICS

auditory processing *n*

the mental processing of auditory information or input particularly speech sounds, as compared to those processes involved in processing visible messages (VISUAL PROCESSING).

aural language *n*

also oral language

language that has been spoken, as compared to written language.

aural-oral approach *n*

see AUDIOLINGUAL METHOD

aural-oral method *n*

another term for AUDIOLINGUAL METHOD

Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings *n*

see INTERNATIONAL SECOND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY RATINGS

authentic assessment *n*

various types of assessment procedures for evaluating test takers' achievement or performance using test tasks that resemble real-life language use as closely as possible.

see ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT, PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

authenticity *n* authentic *adj*

(in teaching) the degree to which language teaching materials have the qualities of natural speech or writing. In language teaching a distinction is made

between materials that have been specially prepared to illustrate or practise specific teaching points (such as reading passages, listening texts, or model conversations) and those that have been taken from real-world sources.

Texts which are taken from newspapers, magazines, etc., and tapes of natural speech taken from ordinary radio or television programmes, etc., are called authentic materials.

It is argued that these are preferred classroom resources since they illustrate authentic language use.

(in testing) the extent to which test tasks correspond to language use in a non-test (i.e. target language use) situation.

authentic materials *n*

in language teaching, the use of materials that were not originally developed for pedagogical purposes, such as the use of magazines, newspapers, advertisements, news reports, or songs. Such materials are often thought to contain more realistic and natural examples of language use than those found in textbooks and other specially developed teaching materials.

authoring system *n*

(in COMPUTER ASSISTED LEARNING) a computer program which is designed to allow teachers and materials designers to write a computer lesson without requiring them to learn how to write a PROGRAM. The teacher concentrates on creating the lesson material, while the authoring system handles such things as the exercise format and the processing of answers.

autism *n*

a brain disorder characterized by impaired social interaction and communication and restricted and repetitive behaviour. Differences in communication are often present from an early age, and may include delayed onset of babbling and unusual gestures. Some individuals with autism do not develop enough natural speech to meet daily communication needs, and many have difficulties with complex language, FIGURES OF SPEECH and INFERENCEING.

autoassociative *adj*

see ASSOCIATIVE MEMORY

automaticity *n*

the ability to carry out an activity or to process information without effort or attention.

see AUTOMATIC PROCESSING

automatic processing *n*

the performance of a task without conscious or deliberate processing. In cognitive psychology, two different kinds of processing employed in carrying out tasks are distinguished. **Controlled processing** is involved when conscious effort and attention is required to perform a task. This places demands on short-term memory (see MEMORY). For example a learner driver may operate a car using controlled processing, consciously thinking about many of the decisions and operations involved while driving. **Automatic processing** is involved when the learner carries out the task without awareness or attention, making more use of information in long-term memory (see MEMORY). Many skills are considered to be “learned” when they can be performed with automatic processing.

In language learning, the distinction between controlled and automatic processing has been used to explain why learners sometimes perform differently under different conditions. For example, a learner may speak a foreign language with relatively few grammatical errors in situations where automatic processing is being used (e.g. when talking in relaxed situations among friends). The same learner may speak less fluently and make more grammatical errors when controlled processing is being used (e.g. when speaking in public before an audience). The presence of the audience distracts the speaker, who uses more controlled processing and this interferes with his or her accuracy and fluency.

automatic translation *n*

see under COMPUTATIONAL LINGUISTICS

autonomous learning *n*

see LEARNER AUTONOMY

autonomy *n*

in language learning, the ability to take charge of one's own learning and to be responsible for decisions concerning the goals, learning processes, and implementation of one's language learning needs. The result is an **autonomous learner**, as compared to one who depends on others to make such decisions. In SELF DETERMINATION THEORY, autonomy refers to the human need to actively participate in determining one's own behaviour. This is not necessarily the same as independence, however, since we can freely choose to do what others want us to do.

see also LEARNER AUTONOMY

autonomy principle *n*

the idea that grammatical notions cannot be reduced to nonlinguistic concepts.

autosegmental phonology *n*

a theory of phonology that does not view representations as merely a linear string of segments but in terms of tiers, each of which is autonomous. Autosegmental phonology has been shown to be especially relevant for the treatment of phonological TONE¹.

auxiliary *n*

another term for AUXILIARY VERB

auxiliary language *n*

another term for LINGUA FRANCA and ARTIFICIAL LANGUAGE

auxiliary verb *n*

also **auxiliary**

a verb which is used with another verb in a sentence, and which shows grammatical functions such as ASPECT, VOICE¹, MOOD, TENSE¹, and PERSON. In English *be*, *do*, and *have* and the MODAL verbs like *may*, *can*, and *will* are all auxiliaries. For example:

She is working.

He didn't come.

They have finished.

You may go now.

Can you manage?

They will arrive tomorrow.

The verbs *working*, *come*, *finished*, *go*, *manage*, and *arrive* in these sentences are called **lexical verbs**, or **full verbs**. Lexical verbs can be used as the only verb in a sentence, e.g. *She works at the factory*. *Be*, *do*, and *have* can also be used as lexical verbs, e.g. *He is happy*, *She does computer studies at university*, and *They have three children*.

availability *n* **available** *adj*

when people are asked to think of the words that can be used to talk about a particular topic, they will be able to think of some words immediately. Those words which they remember first and most easily are said to have a high availability.

For example, when a group of secondary school children were asked to list words for *parts of the body*, they included *leg*, *hand*, *eye*, *nose*, and *ears*. These were the five most available words.

Available words are not always the most frequently occurring words in a language. Availability has been used as a criterion for selecting vocabulary for language teaching.

see SYLLABUS DESIGN

avoidance strategy

avoidance strategy *n*

when speaking or writing a second/foreign language, a speaker will often try to avoid using a difficult word or structure, and will use a simpler word or structure instead. This is called an avoidance strategy. For example, a student who is not sure of the use of the relative clause in English may avoid using it and use two simpler sentences instead:

That's my building. I live there.

instead of

That's the building where I live.